

REMARKS

Claims 1-52 are pending in the subject application. Claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 12-14, 17, 20, 21, 28-31, 36, 38-43, and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,578,131 to Larson et al. (hereinafter, "Larson"). Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Larson in view of the level of skill known at the time the invention was made. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Larson in view of United States Patent No. 6,567,873 to Henriksen. Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22-27, 32-35, 37, 44, 45 and 47-52 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and the intervening claims.

Claims 2-3, 14-15, 22, 32, and 44 have been canceled herein; therefore, claims 1, 4-13, 16-21, 23-31, 33-43, and 45-52 remain pending. In view of the amendments herein, Applicants submit that claims 1, 4-13, 16-21, 23-31, 33-43, and 45-52 are allowable over the art of record and that the subject application is now in condition for allowance.

More specifically:

Claim 1 is amended to include the limitations of claims 2 and 3, as claim 3 is indicated as being allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of claims 1 and 2;

Claims 2 and 3 are canceled herein

Claim 4 originally depended from claim 3 and is amended to indicate that it now depends from claim 1. As claim 1 is allowable over the art of record, claim 4 is believed to be also allowable;

Claim 5 originally depended from claim 1 and is rejected, but as claim 1 is now allowable over the art of record, claim 5 is believed to be also allowable;

Claim 6 is amended to include the limitations of the claims from which it depended - claims 1 and 5;

Claim 7 is not amended herein, as it is indicated as being allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base and intervening claims. As it depends from newly amended claim 6, which includes all of the base and intervening limitations, it is believed to be also allowable;

Claims 8-12 were originally rejected. However, as they each ultimately depend from claim 1, which is now believed allowable over the art of record, these claims are also believed to be allowable;

Claim 13 is amended to include the limitations of claims 14 and 15, as claim 15 is indicated as being allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of claims 13 and 14.

Claims 14 and 15 are canceled herein;

Claim 16 is amended to depend from claim 13. As this claim is indicated as being allowable subject to the inclusion of the relevant limitations, and such limitations are now present in claim 13, claim 16 is also believed to be allowable;

Claim 17 depends from claim 13. As claim 13 is now allowable over the art of record, claim 17 is believed to be also allowable;

Claim 18 is amended to include the base and intervening limitations of claims 13 and 17. Thus claim 18 is believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 19 depends from claim 18. As this claim is indicated as being allowable subject to the inclusion of the relevant limitations, and such limitations are now present in claim 18, claim 19 is also believed to be allowable;

Claim 20 is amended to include the limitations of claim 22, as claim 22 is indicated as being allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of claim 20;

Claim 21 is not amended. Although originally rejected, as this claim depends from claim 20, which is now allowable over the art of record, claim 21 is believed to be also allowable;

Claim 22 is canceled herein;

Claims 23-27 are not amended herein. These claims ultimately depend from claim 20, which has been herein amended to include the limitations of claim 22. As newly amended claim 20 is allowable since it has rewritten to include all of the relevant limitations, these dependent claims are now believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 28 is amended to include the limitation of claim 32, since the latter claim is indicated as being allowable if the limitations of claim 28 are included therein;

Claims 29-31 were originally rejected, but as they depend from newly amended claim 28, they are believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 32 is canceled herein;

Claims 33-35 are not amended herein. Each of these claims is dependent from claim 28. While each is indicated as being allowable if written in independent form subject to the inclusion of the limitations of claim 28, as claim 28 is now allowable over the art of record, these dependent claims are now believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 36 is not amended herein. Although originally rejected, as this claim depends from claim 28, which is now allowable over the art of record, claim 36 is believed to be also allowable;

Claim 37 is amended to include the limitations of claims 28 and 36, as claim 37 is indicated as being allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of such claims;

Claim 38 is amended to include the limitations of claim 44, as claim 44 is indicated as being allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of claim 38;

Claims 39-43 are not amended herein. These claims ultimately depend from newly amended claim 38, which is allowable for the reasons set forth above. Thus, these dependent claims are now believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 44 is canceled herein;

Claim 45 is not amended herein. It depends from newly amended claim 38 and is thus now believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 46 was originally rejected. It depends from newly amended claim 38 and is thus now believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 47 is amended to include the limitations of (original) claims 38 and 46. As this claim is indicated as being allowable if amended to include such limitations, it is believed to be allowable over the art of record;

Claim 48 is not amended herein. This claim depends from claim 7, which is believed allowable for the above-stated reason. Therefore, claim 48 is also believed allowable over the art of record;

Claim 49 is not amended herein. This claim depends from claim 19, which is believed allowable for the above-stated reason. Therefore, claim 49 is also believed allowable over the art of record;

Claim 50 is not amended herein. This claim depends from claim 24, which is believed allowable for the above-stated reason. Therefore, claim 50 is also believed allowable over the art of record;

Claim 51 is amended to include the limitations of (original) claims 28 and 36. As this claim is indicated as being allowable if amended to include such limitations, it is believed to be allowable over the art of record;

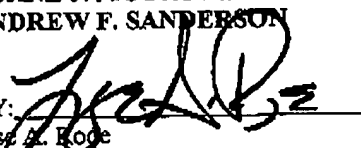
Claim 52 is amended to include the limitations of (original) claims 38 and 56. As this claim is indicated as being allowable if amended to include such limitations, it is believed to be allowable over the art of record;

In view of the foregoing amendments and for the above-stated reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1, 4-13, 16-21, 23-31, 33-43, and 45-52, as rewritten and amended herein, are allowable over the prior art of record, and that the application is in condition for allowance. It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment and reconsideration of the application on whole. An early Notice of Allowance is also respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that personal communication would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (215) 986-5169.

Respectfully submitted,

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The Director for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment to Deposit Account No. 19-3790 of any fees associated with this communication.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile ((703) 872-9306) to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.

June 8, 2004

